

# State of the Industry Conference 2015 Champions of Tourism Letter Delivery

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**Date:** October 22, 2015

**Time:** 9:15 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

**Place:** Exhibition Hall, World Trade Center, Curaçao

**Conference Anchor:** Anita Mendiratta

**Rapporteur:** Marlon Reina

**The Champions of Tourism Letter is an Open Letter urging governments to really champion for the tourism industry in their country. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has already presented 75 Open Letters to heads of governments globally. Together with the UNWTO and the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), the Caribbean Tourism Organization is presenting two letters today to:**

- The Honourable Dr. Rufus Ewing, Premier of the Turks & Caicos Islands.
- The Honourable Clyde Van Putten, Leader of the Government of St. Eustatius.

The letters were presented by:

- The Honourable Richard L. Sealy, Minister of Tourism and International Transport, Barbados and CTO Chairman
- Emil Lee, President, Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association

The concept of the Champions of Tourism Letters was introduced by Carlos Vogeler, Director – Executive Secretary of Member Relations, UN World Tourism Organization and Helen Marano, Vice President, Government & Industry Affairs, World Travel and Tourism Council.

The letter urges governments to champion for tourism. Policies should be introduced to facilitate the growth of the industry as a whole. Some important notes:

- The region is unique with its nature;
- The Caribbean attracts 26 million stay over and 24 million cruise tourists annually. This generates jobs for 2 million of our people;
- Tourism offers human connections.

The measures taken can be very concrete like:

- Protect assets of your market.
- Have policies to protect your cultural heritage.
- Intelligent taxation policies.
- Improvement of the workforce.